



July 18, 2001

The Honorable John Dingell  
United States House of Representatives  
Energy & Commerce Committee  
2322 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dingell:

On behalf of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), I am writing to express our support for the **Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001 (HR 526)**, which you recently introduced.

In America today there is a crisis of confidence in health care. Consumers no longer believe that they can count on their health insurance plans to provide the care that they were promised when they enrolled and faithfully paid their premiums. The growth of managed care has restricted patient choice and increasingly inserted insurance company bureaucrats into the doctor-patient relationship.

**HR 526** is designed to address these problems and level the playing field between patients and their insurance companies. The legislation will provide for a strong and enforceable patients' bill of rights, and we applaud your efforts. Allowing physicians to determine when a treatment is medically necessary restores an important patient safeguard. By applying these and other protections to all private health insurance plans, your legislation will ensure that patients receive the best care their physicians can provide.

ASPS members thank you for your work on behalf of our patients. This legislation is long over-due, and we are proud to endorse the **Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001**. We look forward to working with you in enacting this bill into law for all Americans.

Sincerely,

Walter L. Erhardt, Jr., MD  
President, ASPS

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